REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and clerical errors of the specification have been amended.

In paragraph 4 of the Action, claims 1, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP '993. In paragraph 6 of the Action, claims 2-4 and 7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the rejection and indication of allowability, claim 1 has been amended to clarify the structure to obviate the rejection, and new claim 8 has been filed. Also, claims 2 and 3 have been amended to independent form to be allowable over the prior art, as stated in the Action.

A damper of claim 1 comprises a housing having a cylindrical hollow shape, a viscous fluid filled in the housing, first and second rotors rotatably retained in the housing, and an elastic member.

The first rotor receives a rotational force from an outside, and has a first connecting portion formed on a side surface extending along an axis of the first rotor at one end portion thereof. The second rotor is rotatably retained in the housing coaxially with the first rotor, and has a second connecting portion formed on a side surface extending along an axis of the second rotor at one end portion thereof for allowing the second rotor to rotate together with the first rotor when the second connecting portion is connected with the first connecting portion. The second connecting portion forms a first space in a peripheral direction between the first connecting portion and the second connecting portion when the second connecting portion is released from the first connecting portion so that the viscous fluid passes through the space.

The elastic member is disposed in the housing for urging the first rotor and the second rotor in the peripheral direction to connect with each other, said elastic member accumulating an elastic force when the first and second connecting portions move away from each other.

In the damper of the invention, the first and second rotors are engaged with and disengaged from each other in the peripheral direction without moving in axial directions thereof.

In JP '993, a damper includes a first clutch 50 having teeth 48 at one axial end, a second clutch 44 having teeth 48 at one axial end facing the teeth of the first clutch 50, and a spring 78 urging the first clutch 50 to the second clutch 44. Thus, the first and second clutches 50, 44 engage with each other at axial ends. The first clutch 50 moves away from the second clutch 44 in the axial direction when the clutches are disengaged.

As clearly recited in amended claim 1, the first connecting portion is formed on a side surface extending along an axis of the first rotor, and the second connecting portion is formed on a side surface extending along an axis of the second rotor. The first and second rotors rotate together around the axes thereof when the second connecting portion is connected with the first connecting portion.

In the invention, the locations or positions of the first and second connecting portions are different from the teeth of the first and second clutches 50, 44. Further, in the invention, the elastic member is disposed in the housing for urging the first rotor and the second rotor in the peripheral direction to connect with each other. In JP '993, the spring 78 pushes the first clutch 50 to the second clutch 44.

The features of the invention now clearly recited in claim 1 are not disclosed or even suggested in JP '993.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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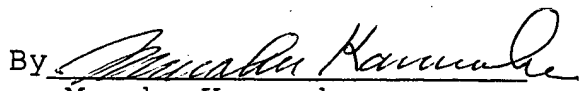
By 
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